

CLAIMS

5 1. A method for transmitting data over a transmission channel, comprising:
 accepting, at an input of a data transmitter, data that has been encoded into a
base layer and an enhancement layer;
 transmitting the base layer on the transmission channel;
 determining if there is enough bandwidth available to the data transmitter to
10 transmit data in addition to the base layer already transmitted; and
 transmitting the enhancement layer if there is enough bandwidth available to
transmit another layer.

15 2. The method of claim 1 wherein determining if there is enough bandwidth
available to the data transmitter to transmit data in addition to the base layer comprises
calculating a bandwidth previously used by the data transmitter in previously transmitting
layers.

20 3. The method according to claim 1 wherein determining if there is enough
bandwidth available to the data transmitter to transmit data in addition to the base layer
comprises measuring data traffic on the transmission channel to determine if enough
bandwidth exists to transmit additional layers.

25 4. The method according to claim 1 wherein the data transmitter has a pre-set
target data rate, and wherein determining if there is enough bandwidth available to the data
transmitter to transmit data in addition to the base layer already transmitted comprises

5 determining whether an average bandwidth used by the data transmitter over a last measuring
period is below the pre-set target data rate.

10 5. The method according to claim 4 wherein the last measuring period is a period
of time.

6. The method according to claim 4 wherein the last measuring period is a period
in which a predetermined number of pieces of data have been transmitted over the
transmission channel by the data transmitter.

7. The method according to claim 1 wherein the data transmitter has a pre-set
maximum transmission rate, and wherein the data transmitter ensures that its rate of
transmitting data is below the pre-set maximum transmission rate.

8. The method according to claim 1 wherein the data is additionally encoded as a
second enhancement layer, the method further comprising:

determining if there is enough bandwidth available to the data transmitter to
transmit data in addition to the base and enhancement layers already transmitted by the data
transmitter; and

transmitting the second enhancement layer if there is enough bandwidth
available to transmit the second enhancement layer.

5 9. The method according to claim 1 wherein transmitting the base layer on the
transmission channel comprises transmitting the base layer on a LAN connection between
two or more computers.

10 10. The method according to claim 1 wherein transmitting the base layer on the
transmission channel comprises transmitting data from a media server to an image projector.

11. The method according to claim 1 wherein transmitting the base layer on the
transmission channel comprises transmitting data from a media server to a decoding device.

12. The method according to claim 1 wherein determining if there is enough
bandwidth available to the data transmitter to transmit data in addition to the base layer
already transmitted comprises calculating at least two average bandwidths used by the data
transmitter, each of the average bandwidths calculated over different measuring periods.

13. A multi-layer data transmission system, comprising:

a transmission scheduler having a first data input configured to accept an
encoded base layer of data and an enhancement layer of data, and the transmission scheduler
having an output terminal; and

a scheduling operation controlling the transmission scheduler and configured
to cause the transmission scheduler to send the base layer of data from the output terminal of
the transmission scheduler when it is received; and configured to determine if there is enough
bandwidth to send the enhancement layer of data.

5 14. The data transmission system according to claim 13 wherein the scheduling operation is also configured to send the enhancement layer of data from the output terminal of the transmission scheduler if there is enough bandwidth to do so.

10 15. The data transmission system according to claim 14, wherein there is enough bandwidth to send the enhancement layer if an average data transmission rate of the transmission scheduler is less than a predetermined rate.

15 16. The data transmission system according to claim 14, wherein there is enough bandwidth to send the enhancement layer if there is available bandwidth on a transmission channel coupled to the output terminal of the transmission scheduler.

20 17. A data transmission system, comprising:
 an encoder having an input for receiving a data stream and configured to
 encode the data stream into a base layer and at least one enhancement layer;
 a transmission scheduler coupled to the encoder and having an input terminal
 to accept the encoded layers of data, and having an output terminal coupled to a transmission
 channel;
 a scheduling operation running on the transmission scheduler and configured
 to signal the transmission scheduler to send the base layer of data from the output terminal of
25 the transmission scheduler after it is received, and configured to determine the bandwidth
 used by the transmission scheduler sending the base layer; and

5 a decoder coupled to the transmission channel and configured to generate an image on a display based on the encoded layers of data received from the transmission scheduler.

10 18. The data transmission system of claim 17 wherein the scheduling operation is configured to determine whether there is enough bandwidth available to the transmission scheduler to send a first of the at least one enhancement layers from the output terminal of the transmission scheduler.

15 19. The data transmission system of claim 18 wherein the scheduling operation is configured to determine there is enough bandwidth available to the transmission scheduler when an average bandwidth rate used by the transmission scheduler is less than a target bandwidth rate.

20 20. The data transmission system of claim 18 wherein the scheduling operation is configured to determine there is enough bandwidth available to the transmission scheduler when an instantaneous bandwidth rate on the transmission channel is below a predetermined rate.

25 21. The data transmission system of claim 17 wherein the scheduling operation is configured to determine whether there is enough bandwidth available to the transmission scheduler to send a first and a second of the at least one enhancement layers from the output terminal of the transmission scheduler.

5 22. The data transmission system of claim 21 wherein the scheduling operation is
configured to determine whether there is enough bandwidth available to the transmission
scheduler to send the first of the at least one enhancement layers from the output terminal of
the transmission scheduler prior to determining whether there is enough bandwidth available
to the transmission scheduler to send the second of the at least one enhancement layers.

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